

least one third supplier having a seal arranged to be opened to the microchip in response to the supply element and the microchip being joined together to enable said substance to be transferred from said at least one third supplier to the first supplier of the microchip.

18. The supply element of claim 17, wherein said seal comprises a chemically resistant substance.

19. The supply element of claim 17, wherein said seal comprises a wax.

20. The supply element of claim 17, wherein said at least one third supplier comprises at least one end sealed by a membrane that is flush with a side surface of the supply element.

21. The supply element of claim 20, wherein said membrane comprises a chemically resistant material.

22. The supply element of claim 20, wherein said membrane comprises one of a metal or a gas-permeable polymer.

23. The supply element of claim 17, wherein said substance of said third supplier comprises at least one substance sample.

24. The supply element of claim 17, wherein said substance of said third supplier comprises at least one substance reagent. ?

25. The supply element of claim 17, wherein said substance of said third supplier comprises at least one substance sample and at least one substance reagent.

26. The supply element of claim 17, further comprising a fourth supplier to transfer the potential to the microchip, said fourth supplier arranged to be coupled to the

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corresponding second supplier on the microchip.

27. The supply element of claim 17, further comprising an attachment arrangement to releasably attach the supply element to supply equipment.

28. The supply element of claim 27, wherein said attachment arrangement comprises a bayonet lock.

29. The supply element of claim 17, further comprising a first coding arrangement to identify the supply element to a second corresponding coding arrangement of supply equipment. ^{the}

30. The supply element of claim 17, further comprising first and second assemblies, said first assembly to contain a module carrying said supply element and supply equipment and said module being releasably connected to said second assembly.

31. A supply element of claim 17, wherein said seal of said at least one third supplier is pierced by an end of said first supplier to enable said substance to be transferred from said at least one third supplier to the first supplier of the microchip.--